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THOUGHTS FOR IDLE HOURS

BY

MAGGIE POGUE JOHNSON

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THOUGHTS FOR IDLE HOURS

BY

MAGGIE POGUE JOHNSON

AUTHOR OF

"VIRGINIA DREAMS"

PS3519
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1915

DEDICATED

TO

MY MOTHER

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2nd.

SOMEBODY'S MOTHER

The world in its wild and maddened flight
Goes heedlessly along,
Pays no thought to the darkest night,
And heeds not a ceaseless throng.

A wanderer poor and forsaken
May pass by one then another,
But he's not noticed at all,
Lest it be by somebody's mother.

Somebody's mother, tho' old and gray,
And bent by life's lengthened years,
Has helped the beggar, so poor, by the way,
And gives him her prayers and her tears.

The girl who falls by the wayside,
And wrecks her dear sacred life,
Who ceases to heed to her guide,
Repents in bitter strife.

The world now laughs her to scorn,
Kicked and buffed by one then another,
She begs for sympathy long—
None offers but somebody's mother.

Somebody's mother holds out her hand,
To take this wanderer in,
Battered and cuffed by a reckless band,
With tattered garments of sin.

The boy who has lived the most reckless life,
And in shame wanders wildly home;
Thro' the world he stumbles in darkness of night,
With a pillow of rock or stone.

He begs from house to house,
He's refused by one then another,
But at last he's aided by one—
You may know 't was somebody's mother.

Somebody's mother with aching heart,
Feels for somebody's child,
Who has no one to take his part,
And wanders so reckless and wild.

Somebody's mother, with waiting hand,
Stands ready to help the poor,
Whenever there's want in demand,
Just go to some mother's door.

Yea! some mother's door—for none can feel,
And offer with greatness of heart,
Like a dear and honored mother,
Who dearly performs her part.

Yea! mother—that sacred word,
Is as dear as the costliest pearl
To the son who has wandered afar—
And the mother's only girl.

Was there ever a word so sweet
To sister, husband or brother,
That every demand could meet,
And in form so simple as mother?

Yea! None—for each letter is dear
And sacred to many a heart,
For others may give words of cheer,
But can't do a mother's part.

THE ROSE

Take not this rose from me,
If thou'd not be guilty of theft;
Rob me not of this beauty flower,
If thou'rt not of reason bereft.

This simple little rose I prize,
Yea! not for its name,
But for its everyday use,
Which has brought it world-wide fame.

Take not this rose from me,
For it may not aid you much,
But it gives me magic power,
And, too, would rob me of such.

Ah! dear little rose, thou hast brought much joy,
To the hearts of many I know;
Thou hast brought smiles to the sweetheart,
When handed by a beau.

Thou hast brought joy and sunshine
To many a gloomy heart,
Ah! blessed little rose—
I cannot from thee part.

Take not this rose from me—
Oh, ye little flower!
The gracious God above
Gives you wondrous power.

He makes the whole world smile,
When on thy face they gaze,
Bewildered by thy beauty,
They offer up great praise.

Thou bringest joy to the sick,
To have thy presence there;
Thou spreadest joy and sunshine,
Alike, yea, everywhere.

And, dear little flower,
E'en however small,
We rue the coming of the day
To see thy petals fall.

To see thy petals one by one
Fall withered to the ground,
Tells us, too, thy work is done,
Thou'st already won thy crown.

Dear little rose, thou art blushing now
To hear me call thee dear,
But with thy attractive beauty
I'd love thee always near.

I'd love to see thy blushing face
Always before my eyes,
I'd then forget the cloudy day,
And, too, see clearer skies.

Ah! clearer skies, for then the clouds
Would gladly give their space
To let the blessed sun shine
On thy smiling face.

Dear little rose, thou'rt drooping now,
Thou art getting weak;
Would'st thou have one drop of water
To cool thy burning cheek—

Or would'st thou rather droop
And slowly die away,
Until the coming Spring—
Thy resurrection day?

When thou in all thy beauty
Wilt shine forth ever new,
To perform thy lasting duty,
Ever faithful—true.

Yea! to perform thy lasting duty
To the sick and to the dead;
Dear rose, that thou art loyal
Hast been nobly said.

Take not this rose from me,
From it I will not part,
To me 't is ever dear,
I'll press it to my heart.

The withered leaves I'll keep,
That I may have them near—
For the memory of the precious rose
I'll hold, yea! ever dear.

TUSKEGEE'S SORROW

(Dedicated to the Memory of Dr. Booker T. Washington)

Weep not, Tuskegee, tho' great be thy sorrow
For him who didst fight and fall for thy cause;
We know thou wilt miss him to-day—yea! to-morrow,
Thou'lt list for his voice, for his steps thou'lt pause.

Weep not, Tuskegee, for him who has left us,
Left us in sorrow and heart-rending grief;
His was a life of toil for his people,
Great was his life work and yet his life brief.

Weep not, Tuskegee, tho' great be thy burden,
Burdens of thought, yea! burdens of care
Fell from the shoulders of thy greatest hero,
Now thou wilt have the burdens to bear.

Weep not, Tuskegee—a nation is weeping,
Save back thy tears and console them in grief;
While thy great hero is peacefully sleeping,
Thousands of grieved hearts pray for relief.

Weep not, Tuskegee, for sorrow unspoken
Is thine, we know, and will ever be,
We know too well that thy heart is broken,
We beg thee to weep not for we weep for thee.

Weep not, Tuskegee, for thy honored hero
Is resting from labor, resting from care;
Peaceful his slumber with no thought of worry,
No thought of even a burden to bear.

Weep not, Tuskegee, the gates now stand open,
The Angel who came so peacefully down
Bore him on high to his great home in heaven,
Placed there upon him a star-studded crown.

Weep not, Tuskegee, but sing of thy hero,
Brave, honored hero who fell for thy name;
We'll laud his mem'ry forever with praises,
Praise for the hero, our hero of fame.

THE SOLDIER'S ADIEU

Farewell, dear heart,
    It grieves me this to say—
But ere you read these lines,
    I shall be far away.

Yea, far beyond
    Where ocean cries bemoan,
The soldier boy,
    Afar from friends and home.

Farewell, dear heart,
    'T is sad to bid adieu
To one whose love
    Has been so stanch and true.

And as I pen these lines,
    My heart doth beat,
And gentle whispers seem
    To say retreat.

But nay! my country's call
    I must obey,
Altho' I miss thee, dear,
    While far away.

Yet pray, dear heart,
    Yes, sweetheart, pray
For him whom thou dost love,
    So far away.

Pray that though
    'Mid shot and shell,
Thy soldier boy be spared—
    And now, Farewell.

THE DRUNKARD'S DREAM

Crime? murder, did I hear you say?
Yes, I killed my wife!
Outside the door in blood she lay,
The victim of a knife.

The victim of a heart that craved for crime,
That craved for blood,
Who feared no foe in face of time,
Nor retribution's flood.

The victim of a soul so black—
Black with earthly sin,
Who feared no bloodhound on his track,
Nor even death's cold grim!

Haunted, yea! by wild desire,
I plunge in depths of crime,
My very soul it seems afire,
Yet, am I sick or blind?

Yes, I killed my wife,
Yes, I killed my child—
My child, a girl of eight—
Yet am I crazed or wild?

My girl, a beauty to behold,
Those eyes, I see them now,
How with expressive look they told
Her love for me, I'll vow.

She was her father's heart,
Each evening at the gate,
I'll see my Nell, how can we part?
But now it is too late!

I pierced a dagger's shining blade
Thro' the heart of my dear wife,
Who's now a victim for the grave,
And yet there was no strife

Betwixt my wife and me;
We always lived as dear
As any couple you might see,
She full of love and cheer.

But it seems some savage beast
Had cast his heart in mine,
I could not rest in peace,
With anger I was blind!

I rushed inside the door,
With the dagger's shining blade,
For murder or for crime,
In blood I wished to wade!

I killed my wife, I killed my child,
And for fear I might be found,
I set my home a-blaze,
And soon 't was to the ground.

My home, my wife, my child—
In one heap of ashes lay,
My heart, my treasure, yea! my all,
Swept within a day.

And now I'm crazed, I'm wild;
What spell was this, I pray,
That caused me kill my child?
Oh, help me, God, I pray!

My wife, and where is she?
I did not kill her, too!
Oh, God, in mercy hear my plea—
What must a sinner do?

Without a home, without a wife,
Without my child, my all,
Battling thro' a world of strife,
Wilt Thou hear my call?

Oh, wife! Oh, child! Oh, do but speak—
I never meant the crime!
'T was drink, 't was cursed rum—
Oh, cursed rum, I'm blind!

As I reached my hand, the cold, cold touch
Was that of a prison wall;
The next the Judge and Jury,
And then the prisoner's fall.

The sentence fell cold and heavy,
In words clearly cut and bare:
"The prisoner found guilty of murder—
His doom the Electric Chair."

Oh! God, I'm choking, I'm dying,
Gasping for every breath,
The result of rum—Oh, how trying,
How bitter and cruel is death!

As I lay there gasping for life,
In a cold, cold prison cell,
Some one shook me and Oh! 't was my wife,
And beside her my daughter Nell!

Why haunt me like this! I gave,
I gave a scream—
Wife pressed a kiss—
"Dear, you're in a dream!"

"Thank God!" I cried, "you've saved my life!
I was almost gone, my darling wife,
Dying from thoughts of—to utter I dare—
Meeting my fate in the cursed chair.

"But thanks be to God! from this very day,
I'll worship Thee only, Oh! help me, I pray;
For Thou in this dream hast shown me the strife
And the bitterness gleaned from a drunkard's life.

"Thou in this dream
Hast broken the spell,
And saved my soul
From a drunkard's hell."

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THE HERO OF AFRIC'S WILD

Bound in fetters and chains,
They come from a country afar,
Sons of chieftains and kings,
Their priestly records mar.

Clothed in slavery's garb,
Doomed to a wretched life,
Away from friends and home,
To battle thro' blood and strife.

We hear the piercing shrieks
Echo from Afric's wild,
Of natives frenzied and crazed,
Mourning for Afric's child.

Mourning for sons of kings,
And princes of wealthy estate,
Brought from the land afar
To bury in slavery's weight.

Crushed 'neath bondage and fear,
They mourn their awful fate,
Heirs of princes and kings
Doomed to an awful fate.

Yea! doomed to slavery's chain,
To live 'neath the awful spell,
To suffer and bear the pangs
Which none would be able to tell.

To suffer—yea, that is small!
Amid the burden of hate,
But think of Afric's fall
And degradation great.

Her kings stand back in disgust,
And curse the land where befell
The crime of slavery's lust,
Worse than the pangs of hell.

Burdened 'neath slavery's hate,
A fervent prayer is heard,
As the slave succumbs to his weight,
And utters on high a few words.

"Master above, wilt Thou hear this,
A slave's poor pitiful cry,
Wilt Thou grant us freedom—
Freedom ere we die?

"Wilt Thou listen to the cries
Of husband, mother and babe,
And 'mid their sufferings great,
Spare mercy to the slave?

"We know Thou wilt hear our cry,
Oh! Master, hear us now,
As humbly at Thy feet
Before Thy throne we bow."

Soon the clouds began to scatter,
And the dread and gloom dispel,
And the slave with all his burdens
Could a brighter story tell.

List! we hear the news of freedom,
Echoed, yea! from land to land;
Slaves rejoice 'mid tears of sorrow,
As they grasp each other's hand.

Ah, thank God! at last we're happy,
For He's heard our woful cry,
And in turn He gives us freedom;
Now we see a clearer sky.

Then an aged Afric chieftain,
Sorrowed to the very grave,
That he of noble blood
Had suffered as a slave,

Bids his dear ones come around him,
To say a last good-bye.
"Since our God did give us freedom,
I feel happy now to die.

"Happy, yea! to leave the land
Where my dear ones face to face
Have suffered, spilt their blood,
And wore the brand of slave's disgrace.

"For way in Afric's sunny wild
Our fathers, true and brave,
Would lose each drop of blood
Before they'd be a slave.

"And let me die, Oh! die so happy!
And tho' I've been a slave,
Before my people get the message,
I'll be happy in the grave."

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AUNT CLOE'S TRIP TO SEE MISS LIZA KYLE

I'se been libin in de country
Fer lo, dese many years,
Country life to me am dear,
Wid no worry en no fears.

But a frien had kindly axed me
To de city fer a while,
Dat I might joy de city life,
De pleasure en de style.

Ob style I neber tho't befo,
En I wondered what was bes,
Since to de city I mus go,
Whar folks all stood de tes.

Well, I pondered en I wondered,
How I mus dress in style,
To go into de city
To see Miss Liza Kyle.

So I writ to her a letter,
"Dear Liza," says I den,
"Dese few lines I writes to you,
As I takes in han my pen.

"I aint so well to-day,
En I hopes you is de same;
I has de rheumatiz so bad,
Dat makes me kinder lame.

"I'll try to be in readiness
To leabe here Tuesday late,
But, Lize, I wants to know de styles,
Case when I nears yo gate,

"I wont be called so countrified,
Not by a hundred miles;
When you see Cloe right at yo doe,
She's gwine to be in style.

"So splain to me jis how to dress,
So anyting I lac
I'll fix en make myself look good,
Case I won't be no ways back.

"I specs to heah from you right soon
In a week er mo;
Wid lots ob lub en kisses,
I'm lubingly, Aunt Cloe."

Well, a day or two had passed,
When I got from her a letter;
I'se feelin kinder scrumptious den,
Case my rheumatiz was better.

En I felt jis right to go to wuk,
To fix myself in style,
To go into de city
To see Miss Liza Kyle.

"Dear Aunt Cloe," de lines read,
"I was glad to get your letter,
And truly hope by this
You're feeling something better.

"Yes, fix yourself in style,
I'll meet you Tuesday late,
For the folks won't understand
Unless you're up to date.

"You must wear a hobble skirt,
Your hair in puffs must be,
With a band of ribbon round your head,
Where a bow you'll fix, you see.

"Your shoe heels must be very high,
And make yourself look small;
Be careful, too, just how you walk,
Or else you'll have a fall.

"You'll have to take short steps
In your hobble skirt, you see,
But that's the latest thing,
And in style you must be.

"Your hat must be extremely large,
With a feather quill behind,
And then you'll be a model sure,
Aunt Cloe, you'll just look fine.

"I enclose a picture here,
Cut from a fashion book,
To show exactly how
The hobble skirt will look.

"Now imitate the picture,
The skirt looks rather tight,
But lace your stoutness down,
And then you'll be all right."

Well, Fodder, what a picture,
Dat skirt looks awful tight,
En fer me to war a ting like dat,
I know I'd look a sight.

I goes to seamstress next day,
Wid dress goods under arm,
To hab my hobble made
So I cud leabe de farm.

A hansome piece ob red I took,
Wid green to make de border,
En axed de seamstress please
To make my skirt in order.

Jis like dis picture here,
Case I mus be in style,
To go into de city,
To see Miss Liza Kyle.

De picture called fer four yards,
But didn't say de size
Ob de woman in de picture,
En I was den surprised,

When I took two yards ob each,
Two ob green en two ob red,
De seamstress shook her head,
It ain't enuf she said.

Well, do de bes you kin, I said,
I got four yards in all,
Dat's all de picture called for,
En I aint near dat tall.

Dats all de samples dat dey had
In colors dat was bright,
En I wants to look a little gay
When I git dar Tuesday night.

Well, I goes to git my dress next day,
En de seamstress she did tell,
'T was de fus one she had done in style,
En tho't she'd done so well.

I jis did hab enuf she said,
So I made de front ob green,
En de back I made ob red
Whar it wouldn't be much seen.

I axed her den to help me dress,
En git myself in style
To go into de city,
To see Miss Liza Kyle.

I guess de puffs is used fer bangs,
Case I haint seed dem befo,
So I pins dem on de front my head,
En behin I puts a bow.

De puffs felt heaby on my head,
But I knowd I was in style,
To go into de city,
To see Miss Liza Kyle.

I den puts on de hobble,
En Oh! but it was tight;
Sich a squeezin I did do
To git my skirt on right.

I was den so sorry
I didn't put my hat on fus,
Case I was skeered to move
For fear my skirt wud bus.

I takes de train fer New York,
Wid satchel in my han,
En de car it was so crowded,
En dar I had to stan.

De folks dey looked me up en down,
But I knowed I was in style,
To go into de city,
To see Miss Liza Kyle.

De ductor axed me whar I'se gwine,
Ef I'se on de proper car,
I tol him none ob his bizness,
Jis so I paid my far.

Soon we landed in de city,
De city ob New York,
En de folks dey stood in swarms
As we landed on de walk.

I seed Miss Liza, she steps back,
En den she starts to run,
I says, "Hol on dar,
None ob dat city fun.

"I specs you doesn't know me
In all dis city style,
But dis is Ole Aunt Cloe,
Does you hear me, Liza Kyle?"

I calls out agin,
Den she starts out walkin' fast,
En I was right behin her,
But I tell you, 't was a task.

Case my hat come cler down on my neck,
My puffs was in my eyes,
My shoe heels pitched me up so high
I thought I'se in de skies.

En ebery step I'd make
My skirt wud pull me back,
Till I got de scissors out de grip
En ripped it down de back.

I pulled dem high-heel shoes off,
En den I sho did run
To ketch Ole Liza Kyle,
But I tell you 't warn't no fun.

She wid dem city friens,
Didn't want to own
Precious Ole Aunt Cloe,
But I followed her right home.

Wid my hobble skirt cut down de back,
My high-heel shoes in han,
I followed her right in de doe,
En she was raisin san,

Mutterin out, some hobo
Had made a big mistake,
En I was settin dar so warm,
I thought dat I wud bake.

She sent de sarvants in,
Said dey, "Dar's some mistake,
Lady, you'se missed de number,
We's skeered we's most disgraced."

I flung my shoes right in der face,
"No police in de lan
Kin git me out ob here,
Right here I takes my stan.

"Ef dis am de greetin dat you git,
When you come in style,
I'll war ole clos de nex time
To see Ole Liza Kyle."

PARTING WORDS

'T is sad to say good-bye,
To part with best of friends;
The tear, the soul's deep sigh
With recollection blend

To make one e'en more sad,
And deepest feeling rent,
Till thoughts of happiness grow mad
O'er hours of pleasure spent.

'T is sad to part with friends,
If friends they be indeed,
When souls unite to blend
In friendship which we need.

'T is sad, tho' howe'er sad,
The soul its depth is touched
With love that makes us glad,
Of friends we love so much.

And tho' we say good-bye
To friends, yea! best of friends,
May He who watches keep thee nigh,
And His protection lend,

Lest we should soon forget
His sacred ruling power,
His love, His tender care,
Which guides each day and hour.

For Thou with jealous thought
Art watching o'er us all,
Lest we should stumble on our way,
And by the wayside fall.

Tho' friends, yea! friends must part,
Our thoughts we bring to Thee,
For Thou canst heal the wounded heart,
And make us glad and free.

The world grows dark and cold,
The warmth it seems has gone,
We part with words untold,
And dearest thoughts unborn.

Yea! the darkness He'll unfold,
And place a shining light,
That the world may ne'er again grow cold,
But stay forever bright.

For tho' some days be dark,
He can make them bright,
He'll clear the skies with a single spark,
E'en the darkest night.

And now the darkness leaves,
The stars forever shine;
Tho' hearts with sadness bleed,
We're Thine, forever Thine.

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WHEN THE HEART GROWS FONDER

Absence makes the heart grow fonder,
One writer so hath said;
Another says stay by me longer,
If you're certain we must wed.

For when you cease to see me, dear,
You'll soon forget me then,
For miles and leagues I fear,
Make differences, my friend.

Absence makes the heart grow fonder,
When all your money's spent,
'Tis then to her, your memories wander,
For a letter—one you sent.

Asking her to be so kind,—
And lend me car fare, dear,
For you know that love is blind,
I wish that you were near.

COULD DREAMS REPEAT

Last night I dreamed I saw you, dear,
And oh! the memories sweet,
They cling as tho' you still were near,
O! could dreams but repeat.

That we might live from day to day,
In ecstacy sublime,
By dreaming dreams of yesterday,
Yea! 'til the end of time.

THE TWINS

Come, daddy come,
Dere's some mistake I fear,
I looked in mudders room,
Two babies is in dere.

Dey bof is in de little bed,
Where I did always sleep,
I tipped up softly to dem,
En tried to take a peep.

I wonder of she knows it,
Fer some poor mudder now,
I spec is cryin awful hard,
Fer tother one I'll vow.

En some ole ugly oman
Has stealed it I jis bet,
En brung it to my mudder,
Some money fer to get.

But bof look jis alike,
Come daddy, come en see,
Der hair is jis like mudder's
En eyes bof jis like me.

What did you say, my daddy,
Dat bof longs at dis house
En dat I mus be quiet,
Quiet as a mouse—

So de babies dey kin sleep,
En not worry my po' mudder?
I wish dey hadn't bro't jis one,
Much less to think anodder.

THE GYPSY QUEEN'S REVENGE

Revenge! the word is sweet,
'Tis pleasant to the ears,—
To have on him revenge,
For suffering and tears.

Revenge! ah, cruel heart!
Thou'st bro't me to the dust,
Now thou must suffer pain,
In me thy soul must trust.

Thy heart must burn as mine has burnt,
With bitter pain and woe,
Thou'lt lick the dust as I have,
I make this vow! yes, go!

Ye wretched, cruel curse,
To take my child, my son,
And sentence him to prison,
This cursed deed thou'st done.

I begged thee pity spare,
He's not the guilty one,
But cruel wretch thou didst not care,
But took mine only son.

Mine only son! my child,
As innocent and pure
As a babe at it's mother's breast,
My child I did adore.

I begged on bended knee,
And never before have I
Begged with broken heart,
'Til my throat was parched and dry.

And thou, yea, cursed wretch!
For this cruel deed,
Thou'lt suffer all thy days,
Thou and all thy seed.

Thy son shall reap the woeful seed,
For this that thou hast done,
Thou'lt see him linger in the dust,
When the harvest time has come.

Revenge, ah! sweet it sounds,
Aha! I see them come,
Your daughter she shall suffer too,
For this that thou hast done.

I see them settled, yea! in pomp,
At a feast, a table grand,
The family happy, yea! so gay,
All things at their command.

The Earl whom I'd begged for pity,
Standing at the head—
With all his sons around him,
While mine to me is dead.

Yea, dead! for way behind the prison walls
He's dead to joy and mirth,
My son why suffer this,
I rue thy day of birth.

I hasten to the great house,
Where all is grand and gay,
And in an upper chamber,
An infant baby lay.

The mother at the great feast,
The nurse was not about,
So I wrap him in a blanket,
And soon we're out the house.

Slowly I stealt thro' the darkness,
'Til we reached the edge of the town,
There I placed him in safe keeping,
That I might continue my round.

When I returned to the great house,
The gaiety serene,
Had turned to a picture of sadness,
Sadness and sorrow extreme.

The screams of the grief stricken mother,
I'll hear 'til the day of my death,
But no greater to me than my sorrow,
When I begged with choking breath.

Begged to save my child,
My only child! my boy!
From the walls of a cold, dark prison,
My son, my only joy.

I had no heart when I lost my son,
For it seemed my innermost depths,
Left me to go with my precious one,
To suffer in prison and death.

I saw the Earl's daughter wriggle in pain,
Mourning the loss of her child,
While the father with gun threats to blow
out his brain,
As he walks in delirium wild.

They suffer just half that I suffered,
For none as the gypsy wild,
Can suffer the pain that I have borne,
In the loss of an only child.

I have no heart, no tender cord,
For my heart has turned to stone,
As I wander to seek revenge,
Thro' this cold, cold world alone.

The Earl's son has died heart broken—
Over the loss of his child,
While the mother behind walls is a manaic,
Wandering in phantoms wild.

The Earl himself is helpless,
Paralyzed with grief,
And my visits are so frequent,
That he finds no time for relief.

For I stand and wail revenge at him,
'Til he seems a mass of stone,
Gasping it seems for every breath,
As he sits in his study alone.

My face will ever haunt him,
'Til his life slowly ebbs away,
And the breath leaps from his stolid frame,
On his last, his dying day.

Revenge, aha! 'tis come,
The smiles but freeze on my face,
As I see his sons falling one by one,
In utter shame and disgrace.

I hear the cries wildly o'er the town,
That the great, great Earl has died.
I gladly give up my gypsy crown,
I can die now satisfied.

Full satisfied for revenge,
Has had a powerful sway,
She's leapt into that family,
And took them all away.

While their child remains to suffer—
As my child, my son,
For both are but children of the dust,
And neither a guilt has done.

THE HOO-DOO MAN'S DISGRACE

Dar was curious times in George-town,
When de folks met face to face,
To listen to de story—
Ob de Hoo-doo man's disgrace.

For days dar'd bin great citement,
'Mong de ole folks ob de town,
Cernin different pains en ailments
Ob de ones who's stricken down.

Dese here folks is tricked,
Ant Mandy Skinner swore—
As she called to see de patients
In her roun from doe to doe.

Yes, dey sho is conjured,
Case all has curious spells,
En all de medicine dat you gib,
Will nebah make em well.

En to let dese folks all die,
'Twill be a ragin sin—
So you jis well cide right now,
En call de Doctor in.

Dr. Henry Edmond Tyler Fox,
Dat libes four miles away,
Is a fus class Conjur Doctor,
So all de people say.

En ef you calls him in,
Fo anodder Sunday night,
I bet dese curious ailments—
Will be cured alright.

Ant Mandy she was talkin,
To Brudder Johnny Lynn,
Who tho't to jis say conjur,
Was a powerful sin.

Says, he "I neber beliebed in sich,
But I'll solve to try,
Dis ole Conjur Doctor,
Rader den to die."

So he calls his son Joe Billy,
To saddle up ole Bess,
En go en git de Doctor,
To try de Conjur test.

Joe Billy starts out in a race,
To fin de conjur man,
He went so fas he lef no trace
Of foot-prints in de san.

En soon he's to de house
Ob de famous Doctor Fox,
De fus ting Joe did recognize,
He nebah woe no socks.

A tall en lanky man
Wid bar-feet, dey right flat,
Dese pants yo call high waters,
En a rusty ole felt hat—

Wid de top of it cut off,
Whar his wooley hair come thro,'
Mad him a funny sight,
Ob a typical hoo-doo.

En a sho hoo-doo he was,
Case ob all de roots en pills,
Doctor Fox he had ob ebery kind,
Dat sho might cure or kill.

I'll sho be dar by day-light,
He turns en says to Bill,
As he gins to pick up roots,
His satchel fer to fill.

I'll fus go to de grabe-yard,
En dar I has to look,
En search dar 'til I find,
A lef hind rabbit foot.

En wid dis rabbit foot,
En anodder test you see,—
I'll soon fin out de place,
Whar de trickery mout be.

You see some times dey lay fer folks,
En puts it in de groun,
Den some times fer a change,
Befo your doe 'tis foun.

En yo poor pap's sad condition,
Will sho grow wus en wus,
'Til I find de bery spot,
Whar de conjurer went to fus.

I'll hab to take de conjur test,
En turn it ebery way,
Fus to de East den de West
To see jis whar it lay.

So don't be worried tall, my boy,
Cheer up cheer up my lad,
I'll sho be dar by day-light,
To cure your poor ole dad.

Joe Billy started den fer home,
De message fer to tell,
Dat soon de Conjur man wud come,
To make poor daddy well.

De ole man in good spirits,
Sot near de window den
En solved he'd nebah shet his eyes,
'Til he seed his conjur frien.

Sleep gin to obercome him,
But he'd nod den take a look,
'Til soon he recognized a form,
Says he, la! dar's a spook.

He watched de so called spook,
En called to his son Joe,
Jis den de spook gin diggin,
Wid sompin like a hoe.

Den takes a little package,
En puts it in de groun.
Kivers it wid dirt,
Den tramps it roun en roun.

De ole man sot en watched,
'Til de spook it went away,
Soon he nods agin,
'Twas about de peep ob day.

He heahs a knock den at de doe,
En Joe de doe unlocks,
En face to face he meets,
De famous Doctor Fox.

He comes en feels de pulse,
Ob Joe's poor Daddy den,
Says he, my frien, I's jis in time,
You's almos at de end.

Yo life is in my hans,
En fer fifteen dollars cash,
I'll move dis conjuration,
En save you in a dash.

Dat you is tricked, my man,
Is de truf ef I mus tell,
En dis heah rabbit foot,
Will sho ward off de spell.

"Ef you'll set right by de window,
Whar you kin look en see,
I'll take dis test en find,
Whar de trickery mout be."

He goes out side de doe,
En wid his so called test,
He turns to see which way it pints,
To de East or to de West.

Says he, "Right to de East,
You see de dose it lay,
I'll dig, too, 'til I find it,
Yes, fo anodder day."

He digs en digs 'til soon,
He ketches by a string,
En pulls ob sompin heaby,
En gibs ob it a sling.

A big red ball ob cotton,
En a bottle to it tied,
"Ef dis here ting had not bin foun,
My frien you sho would died."

Ant Mandy she jis clapped her hans,
En says, "I tole you so,
I knowd dat he could cure you,"
En den she calls fer Joe,

En tells him go en tell de friens,
En neighbors all aroun,
Ob de famous Doctor Fox,
En de trickery he foun.

Soon de hous was full,
De yard en kitchen too,
To look at Doctor Fox,
En see what he could do.

De lame, de halt, de blind,
All standin at de doe,
To ax ob Doctor Fox,
To gib ob dem a sho.

"I'd like to say a wud,"
Den put in Brudder Lynn,
En all did gaze wid glarin eyes,
As to talk he did begin.

"Now, dis here Doctor Fox
Is nuffin but a bluff,
Wid all his lies en talk,
About dis conjur stuff.

"I sot en watched dat bery imp,
About de peep ob day,
A diggin in my yard,
De conjur fer to lay.

"En now he digs it up,
En tells de woeful tale,
Dat some one's laid fer me,
To gib his roots a sale.

"Now, famous Doctor Fox,
I'll gib ob you a test,
You see dis gun, now turn,
Fus to de East or West.

"Look not behin or else,
De bullets tell de tale,
Ob de famout roots en herbs,
Dat neber got a sale.

Doctor Fox he lef wid rapid pace,
He neber looked behind,
To see de congregation,
Ob de lame, de halt, de blind.

His coat tail stood out in de breeze,
His foot prints in de san,
De leabes did wave on dog wood trees,
Good-bye to Hoo-doo man.

He lef ole George-town sho—
In a mighty rapid pace,
But de folks all do remember,
De Hoo-doo Man's disgrace.

WHAT TASK MUST THE WOMAN FULFILL

As the sun finds it's way to the golden West,
And soon disappears from sight—
Then the moon takes his place to watch o'er us
Thro' the still and silent night;
As we gaze on the stars above,
Our hearts with ecstasy thrill,
While we ask in tones of love—
"What task must the woman fulfill?"

Yea! woman in by-gone years,
Thou wert not recognized,
Save as to slave to thy help-meet with fears
Neath the gloom of cloudy skies;
Thou knew no other place,
Save to labor, toil and yield,
Thy record had no place,
For honor or for zeal.

But Ah! the buried past,
May well forgotten be;
Her mem'ry still may last—
But the dreaded yoke is free;
Yea free! and woman now
Stands in her strength alone
To battle for the right,
And for her sins atone.

Ere since the days of Christ
We've read of woman's boon;
The last to seek His face—
The first one at the tomb;

From thence to future years
She'll hold an upward sway,
She's laid aside her doubts and fears,
Now woman has her way.

What progress would there be to-day,
What honor or what fame
Could you in garb array,
Without a woman's name?
Yea! man may be the hero—
But woman placed him there,
She pushed him with her zeal,
Her cheering words, her care.

What hero in the world to-day,
Could well have won the name,
Lest woman in her modest way,
Had led him on to fame?
'Tis she then who inspires him,
And gives him zeal to work;
She urges him with earnest prayers,
From duty ne'er to shirk.

Yea! woman with her prayers—
Woman with her love—
Has soothed so many cares,
And wafted them above;
Wafted them on wings of prayer,
To Him who dost heed our call,
And notes each little needed care,
E'en to a sparrow's fall.

We gaze on the clouds above us,
Sometimes they are tinted with gold,
Sometimes they are dark and heavy—
And tales of gloom enfold;
Tho' the clouds be dark and heavy,
And dread and gloom dispel,
There's inside a silver lining,
Which a brighter story tells.

Then our lives may have some dark days,
But there're brighter days to come,
Which may enswallow the dark clouds—
And they leave us one by one;
Man has been hovering o'er us,
As the dark and heavy clouds,
But the silver lining bursts forth
In the form of woman proud.

She comes with words of cheer,
With rapture our very hearts thrill
As she asks of many here—
"What task must the woman fulfill?"
What must she find to do,
In a world so cheerful and bright,
In the land where laborers are few,
Who're struggling to do the right.

Man has won laurels of fame,
And kept them yea! for years,
Hist'ry records his name,
And we laud his mem'ry with cheers;

Now woman comes upon the scene,
Her chances may be few,
But records soon will glean—
What woman, too, can do.

She stands with outstretched arms,
Waits ere the morning dawns,
To do some act of kindness
For the helpless or forlorn;
She gazes in the darkness
Of the city's lowest dives,
Where girls have gone to shame,
Where men have wrecked their lives.

Slowly she wends her way,
'Til she's reached this lowly place,
Where many lives are wrecked
In sorrow and disgrace;
With a prayer she enters in
To lead the straying girl
From the depths of blackest sin,
To an out-side praying world.

And on she goes thro' life,
With ready waiting hands,
To work thro' sin and strife—
What e'er be the urgent demand,
To lead the wanderer on,
In paths of truth and right,
And crush the sin and wrong—
Neath the wings of darkest night.

Now her mind it slowly wanders,
As she struggles on thro' life,
Thro' the rugged high-way,
Onward up the hill of strife;
Treading, slowly treading,
Marching to the road of fame,
Woman, with her earnest efforts,
Each year in and out the same.

What task must the woman fulfill,
Wait not for the answer to come,
Conscience speaks, obey the will—
Woman's vict'ry will be won;
Let not the precious years go by,
And find your record blank,
Catch the moments ere they fly,
With woman out of rank.

Woman place thy record high,
When the flag of honor's unfurled,
Let woman's name against the sky
Glitter to the world;
Glitter in letters of gold,
Against the placid blue,
Let woman's fame be told
In letters bold and true.

Let her name be brighter, brighter,
May the letters ne'er grow dim,
For He who makes the burdens lighter
Always keeps his lamps in trim;

Woman may thy name be written,
That thy deeds may ever shine
In the land of golden treasures,
Where the vict'ry may be thine.

CAN'T HAVE A BEAU

I'm vexed, yea! truly vexed,
Why shouldn't I be so,
To know I'm sweet sixteen
And then can't have a beau.

Can't have a beau!
To me there is no joy,
When I can't speak or laugh,
Or think about a boy.

Aunt Emeline at eighteen,
Married Uncle Si—
They courted, too, for three years,
Suppose it had been I?

Grandma Green at thirteen,
Had married, too, I think,
Further more there's Bob
And little Annie Brink—

They married very young,
Yes they are happy yet,
I'm sure they have no cause
For worry or regret.

But it seems that I
Must never speak to boys,
To me the world is blank,
No pleasure, ah! no joys.

I dare not give a smile
To William or to Joe,
But what some one replies,
Your mother ought to know.

And I, too, sweet sixteen,
I know I'm plenty old,
But all the mouthy neighbors
Say mother must be told.

I know what I'll do,
Yes, just for real spite,
I wonder if they'll think
I've done exactly right?

I'll never notice any boy,
But act as tho' afraid,
And live, tho' destitute of joy,
An old and cranky maid.

ANGELINA WEDS

Dar was citement in de village,
En all de country roun,
When de notice it was read out
By Parson Reuben Brown,

Dat on next Wednesday mornin,
Edmond Rufus Johnson White
Will be boun in matrimony
To Miss Angelina Knight.

All is vited to be present;
Gent'men all mus war full dress,
Ladies, wid yo tucks en ruffles
Try to look yo bery best;
Dar needn't be no odder viting,
Case de news it farly flew,
En when Wednesday mornin come, I tell you,
Dem folks knowd jis what to do.

All de mules en all de hosses,
Dey was hitched en placed in line;
Gals wid fellows in de ox-cart,
Gwine to see Miss Angeline;
Sich anodder fuss en coatin,
Mules a stallin in de road,
Hosses, too, dey got to balkin,
Case dey had sich heaby load.

De hour fixed was seben thirty,
En dey started in a rush,
But de teams had all got stalded
Case de roads was in a mush;
De bride en groom dey was behin,
En der ole hoss did farly fly,
Till dey kotch up wid de odders,
Den dey axed to let dem by.

But dar was no room to pass,
Case de teams was two abreas,

Mule teams, hoss teams en de ox teams,
Side by side wid all de res;
Den de folks all in de ox-cart,
Dey did jump out one by one,
Ole Jim Buster was de driver,
He said sumpin mus be done;

Case de hour is fas proaching
When de bride en groom mus wed,
We'll hab to move dese hosses—
Come en help us, Uncle Ned.
Uncle Ned he comes a hoppin,
Wid his high silk beaver hat,
En his big leg pants a floppin,
Stumped his toe en fell right flat.

Sich anodder lookin mess,
En he to gib de bride away,
Standin mud from head to foot,
Eyes en mouf all full ob clay;
You had no business axin me,
Yo scoundel, see what you has done!
Ruined me en all dese clos
Dat I borrowed from Jim Gun.

En all dis nice silk beaver hat,
It am all done ruined, too,
I kin neber pay fer dat—
What on earth is I to do?
While he stan dar sayin dat,
Up jumped Uncle Jimmy Cole,
Him en ole man Eli Black,
Wid a heaby cedar pole,

Placed it under dem two mules,
Prized dem out de big mud hole;
Den you heah de folks a yellin,
Gib three cheers fer Jimmy Cole!
Den dey gib dem mules a cut,
Chillun, dey did sholy fly,
Ebery team was in de road
Dem two mules did pass dem by.

Soon dey rived right to de chuch,
Preacher he's already dar,
Wid his boots en socks off, restin,
Case he'd walked so bery far;
De chuch it was all decerated
Wid apple blossoms, pink en white,
Pine tops hangin to de center,
Morning glories fresh en bright.

Sunflowers wid der heads er bowin,
Johnie Jump-Ups by der side,
All a bowin en a smilin
In full honor ob de bride;
Dogwoods, too, did gib der honor,
Ox eye daisies, snowy white,
All a blossomin in honor
Ob Miss Angelina Knight.

De bride she woe white satin,
Wid a veil dat tech de flo,
En a long train to her dress
Reachin cler back to de doe;
She woe white satin slippers, too,
Little gals dey hel her trail—

She come down de aisle a trippin
Doe she's walkin on some nails.

De ladies marched down one aisle,
De gent'men down de odder,
While strollin long behin
Come Angelina's modder;
She a walkin wid a cane,
A kerchief on her head,
A long-stem pipe was in her mouth
As down de aisle she sped.

De preacher was a little late—
De Reverend Richard Root—
His feet had swole up so
He couldn't war his boots;
En he come down de aisle
De bride en groom to meet,
A bowin en a smilin,
In his stockin feet!

En Uncle Ned was standin dar
To gib de bride away,
You could scarcely see his face
Fer all de mud en clay;
You sholy wud bin boun to laf,
Case he wid all his pride,
Standin dar in all dat mud
To gib away de bride.

De preacher axed Miss Angeline
Ef she'd take dis lubin man,
En cherish him thro' troubles,
Doe dey be as grains ob san,

En ef you tinks you lubs him,
Fer better or fer wuss,
De answer is, I do,
Doe yo life might be a cuss.

Miss Angeline she gibs a smile,
En twis her head jis so—
I do, but Mr. Preacher,
Please don't ax no mo.
He tuns den to de groom,
Says he, well, Brudder White,
Kin you care fer dis here lady
Thro' de gloomy days en bright?

Kin you meet her wid a smile,
Doe you'se angry as a bar?
Ef you kin, my deares brudder,
De answer is, I swar;
Wid perspiration drippin,
Mr. White he bowed his head,
In solemn wuds he said, "I swar,
Now hand her to me, Ned."

Ned let a loose her arm,
And she kotch hol Brudder White,
Den de preacher said, I nounce you
As her husban, she yo wife;
Den dey ceived de gratulations,
En marched on up de aisle,
Each gent-man wid his lady,
Dey a struttin in sich style.

Rigs outside de doe a waitin,
Hosses tryin not to stan;

Mules a kinder actin gaily,
Oxen dey a raisin san;
All was gibin ob der honors,
Showin forth der great delight
In carrying off de bridle party
Ob Edmond Rufus Johnson White.

THE LAD WITHOUT A NAME

(Dedicated to the Memory of Dr. Booker T. Washington)

In a lowly one-room cabin
Lived a little Negro boy,
Hampered by the chains of slav'ry,
Yet it did not him annoy.

Often tho' he noticed mother,
While he played in childish glee,
Praying with her hands uplifted,
"Master, wilt Thou make us free?"

He was then too young to take in,
Yea! too young to understand
The awful curse of slav'ry,
Which was spread thro'out the land.

Never'less he watched his mother,
Oh! the love that mother had,
Caring for her little children,
Poorly fed and poorly clad.

She was struggling with great efforts
To supply her children's need,
Bringing bits of after-leavings,
That her children she might feed.

When she came into the cabin,
There they'd gather at her knee,
The younger was the nameless lad,
Since known as Booker T.

His mother called him Booker,
Just because of books he's fond;
He had no real name,
This lad of slav'ry's bond.

So now is spread thro'out the land
The hist'ry of the fame
Of him who started his career
As a lad without a name.

Soon he hears the bells of freedom,
Ring thro'out the entire land,
He heard folks say that he was free,
Yet little could he understand.

So he started out into the world,
And found he had no name,
Then he added more to Booker,
That he might have some claim.

Booker had great thirst for knowledge,
"There is something I must learn,"
So decides to find a way,
As for wisdom he did yearn.

All ye children know the story,
How he tramped the rugged road,
Facing knowledge, facing wisdom,
Burdened 'neath the heavy load.

For he had no means to meet it,
Meet the monster he must face,
But his great desire for learning
Did the hindrances erase.

So, sickened, worn and weary,
To Hampton he found his way,
Thirsting for the understanding
Which he hoped to have some day.

There he struggled for his learning,
Which prepared him for his fate,
And in after years the yearning
Which did serve to make him great.

He left his school with highest honors,
That his people he might serve,
And thereby give to them the knowledge
Which he hoped they might deserve.

For years he struggled for his people,
Toiling, yea! thro'out the land,
Making every sacrifice
That they might understand.

So he built a towering statue,
Monumental, mammoth, grand,
Which will serve a lasting tribute,
Wavering, yea! thro'out the land.

Serve as tribute to the mem'ry
Of him who gave his life,
Probing out the greatest problem
Which has banished bitter strife.

Greater work was ne'er accomplished
By a poor and nameless lad,
Who won a noble reputation,
Which should make his people glad.

And now we know that we have lost him,
Oh, the bitter pangs we feel!
As we think about our hero,
While around Thy shrine we kneel.

May his statue ever tower,
Bringing knowledge, bringing fame,
To the children who give honor,
To the lad without a name.

May the lasting mem'ry ever
Cherished by his people be,
That each letter may be sacred,
In the name of Booker T.

And years to come will give the story,
Write the hist'ry of the fame,
Of him who started his career,
As the lad without a name.

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